

2-15-65  
DE DRAFT OF SPEECH TO BE GIVEN  
BY NGUYEN ANNOUNCING JULY ESCALATION  
IN VN - ~~OKD~~ BY RSM, MCG <sup>1965</sup>  
BUT NOT DELIVERED. INSTEAD (DECEPTIVE)  
STATEMENT BY LBJ AT PRESS CONFERENCE  
7-22-65 (SEE "PAPERS ON WAR") 7/22/65  
Draft Statement

It is the intent of the United States Government, reaffirmed on many occasions, to do whatever is necessary to help South Vietnam preserve its independence.

I have just returned from a trip to South Vietnam, with Ambassador Lodge and General Wheeler, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to help us determine what is now necessary. It was our purpose to review the force level planned for South Vietnam, the number of U.S. troops to be assigned there, the equipment required, the expected consumption of munitions and other products. We had the opportunity for full discussions with Ambassador Taylor, with General Westmoreland and other senior U.S. Commanders, and with Premier Ky and members of the GVN, all of whom gave us their latest appreciation of the requirements for moving toward our mutual objectives in SVN.

Our discussions confirmed, in considerably more detail, the situation as I described it for the press just before leaving: that the Viet Cong have continued to increase their forces in South Vietnam, importantly through continued infiltration of troops, leadership, and now, regular North Vietnamese combat units; that the level and intensity of operation during the summer has increased, as we predicted it would; and that we can expect further increases in Viet Cong operations because of the likely commitment of forces not yet committed to combat. As the President had already stated, we left for SVN with the knowledge that our findings might well show an increased American response on the ground in SVN to be necessary: which, in turn, would require steps to insure that our reserves of men and equipment in the U.S. remained adequate for



any and all emergencies. We returned with the convictions, shared also by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Westmoreland and other senior U.S. Commanders, that these steps were indeed urgently required.

We shall be adding, in the ~~xxxxxxforxxxxxx~~ near future, combat and support troops totalling about 100,000 to those already within SVN. Our forces there will defend their own bases; they will assist in providing security in neighboring areas; and they will be available for more active combat missions when the Vietnamese Government and General Westmoreland agree that such active missions are needed, as they surely will be. To offset these additional deployments and to reconstitute the central reserve, we shall be calling up some reserve units, increasing our draft calls and extending some tours of duty.

At this time, when we are calling for new burdens and sacrifices from the families and young men of this country, it is right that we should spell out once again why it is that these efforts are needed. What is the nature of the conflict in which we are participating in SVN, and what are the stakes in that conflict for the people of the United States and the free world? I can best address those broad issues by focusing some questions on the role of the men who are being called upon to hazard their lives in the service of their country.

Why are they needed in Vietnam, at this time? Who are the people they are fighting to protect in that country, and who are they fighting against? Finally, what are they fighting for, in Southeast Asia and in terms of the broader interests of the United States?



First: the need for urgent deployment of additional U.S. troops. It has become clear, in the last two months, that neither our earlier evidences of our commitment to the defense of SVN, nor our repeated offers of unconditional discussions, have persuaded the Government of North Vietnam to abandon its attempt to win control of the people of South Vietnam by the military victory of the Communist-led Viet Cong forces. On the contrary, Viet Cong, directed and supported by Hanoi, have quickened the pace of their terrorism and military attacks. They evidently hope to crack, this summer, the major obstacle to their success: the ~~as yet~~ unbroken morale of the armed forces of South Vietnam and of the people they defend, the majority of the population who are hostile to a Viet Cong victory. The summer offensive of the Viet Cong appears to be to overwhelm isolated army units, outposts and outmanned relief columns and to overrun lightly defended district towns. In order to inflict 2000 killed upon the SVN armed forces in the months of May and June, the Viet Cong have been willing to commit previously unused main force units, some in regimental strength, and to accept among their own troops over 5000 dead at the hands of the defenders and South Vietnamese and American air support. At the same time, Viet Cong terrorism has taken on increasingly large scale. They have begun to burn entire villages in the Central Highlands of Vietnam and to kidnap the entire population of others; in recent months, over 375,000 refugees have fled from their depredations.



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This summer South Vietnam is in crisis. That Hanoi is gambling for decisive results in this monsoon season is shown by the intensified Viet Cong operations: by their willingness to commit regular units in large-scale attacks and to accept heavy casualties. It is shown in the testimony of defectors and captured plans. It is shown by the increased infiltration and by the increasingly flagrant character of the North Vietnamese intervention, capped by the deployment and commitment in SVN of regular regiments of the Peoples' Army of North Vietnam.

X The prize at stake in this summer offensive is, in part, the control of rural territory. But even more, it is psychological. The prize to be gained or lost by one side or the other in this campaign is belief in ultimate victory. And in a war that has gone on now for a very long time, that prize can be decisive. The apparent victor, if there is one, of the summer monsoon campaign may well gather the confidence and support essential to a successful resolution.

With the Viet Cong gambling for this stake, the fighting will be bitter. Nevertheless, the 65,000 main force troops and 80-100,000 part-time guerrillas of the Viet Cong are numerically inferior to the regular, paramilitary and police forces of the South Vietnamese government, which number altogether some 550,000. Why, then, are more troops -- and U.S. troops -- needed to deal with the Viet Cong challenge?



A first consideration is that an overall numerical factor of 3 or 4 to 1, low as it is in terms of the requirements of combating guerrilla operations, understates the relative combat strength of the Viet Cong. The Viet Cong main force combat units in South Vietnam are the offensive cutting edge of an army whose <sup>major</sup> logistic and command tail lies largely across the border in North Vietnam. <sup>P</sup>The training facilities for the 45,000 infiltrators -- at least 6000 this year -- who have formed the leadership, the technical specialists and the hard core of the main force units, are in the North. The supply depots, that issue the latest Chinese Communist arms with which the main force units are now almost entirely equipped, are in the North. The command and communications centers, where the central planning and staffwork is performed and high-level management originates; these, too, are in the North. All of these are manned by officers, troops and trainees that are not found in the figures for Viet Cong combat strength.

When all the corresponding personnel are subtracted from the 250,000-man total of the South Vietnamese regular armed forces, let alone the troops tied down manning and defending bases and population centers, what remains is by no means a 4 to 1 superiority in combat strength.

In many areas, the confrontation of deployed combat battalions on both sides is now on even terms. That is not enough. Nor can the best efforts of the GVN to recruit and train new troops expand its forces fast enough to meet its needs, in the face of continual infiltration <sup>from the North</sup> and the summer monsoon offensive.



Facing Viet Cong forces of the current size and organization, government forces lack adequate mobile reserves. Without these, they must respond too slowly or not at all to attacks on outlying villages and outposts, or send relief forces that are themselves liable to be outmanned by a Viet Cong ambush. Moreover, they lack adequate offensive forces to seek out and destroy throughout the countryside, an elusive enemy who has no responsibility to defend territory or people and can choose to evade battle. Yet to let a Viet Cong unit persist unchallenged in any region is to let it grow by taxes and drafts levied on the local people, and to sacrifice governmental authority in the eyes of those people by failing to provide them security.

The deficiencies of the government forces -- in defensive forces, in general reserves, in forces for offensive action -- in the face of this strong drive must be made up quickly; and for many months ahead they can be made up only by forces from outside, principally from the United States. Nor will the need for much larger troops diminish after the summer offensive has been blocked. It is the purpose of our new deployments to meet these needs, which will extend well beyond this year.

DPP None of our objectives in South Vietnam can be gained if government forces, with all the help we can provide, do not blunt and bloody the monsoon offensive, and then follow up that success, to the point of persuading the Viet Cong leaders in Hanoi that they cannot win in the South.

The next question is: Who will our troops be fighting to defend in South Vietnam, and who will they be fighting against? This question bears on the political character of the conflict in South Vietnam. Should we -- as some have done -- infer from the strength of the Viet Cong as I have described it that it benefits from the sympathy and support of the greater part of the population of South Vietnam? Should we conclude, as



our opponents claim and many others ~~may~~ believe, that North Vietnam is supporting the popular side in a civil war, while we are intervening to block the desires of the majority? The answer is "No" on all counts. If it were otherwise, our past and present commitments would be meaningless, nor could the Government of the United States ask of the American people their support and their sacrifice.

One fact is fundamental: the great majority of the people of South Vietnam do not want the Viet Cong to win.

They would like the war to be over: but not at the price of a Viet Cong victory. They would like social, political and economic change: but they do not want to live in a Communist state. They would like to see their country united: but not by war, and not under the domination of the Communist regime of North Vietnam.

In these matters -- if in little else -- the leaders and membership factional groupings that comprise the majority of South Vietnamese population are united: Buddhists and Catholics, unions and businessmen, armed forces, civil servants, students, and religious sects. These groups, and especially their leaders, know well that a Viet Cong victory would mean a Communist state in South Vietnam: modelled on, eventually dominated by, the Communist regime in North Vietnam. They know well what that would mean for their fate. Very many of these people would fight on to prevent that, even against hopeless odds, if the outside help vital to their cause were withdrawn. They would be fighting for their freedom; and many of them would be fighting for their lives.



Indeed, in many cases their lives would be at stake precisely because they had acted on faith in the repeated pledges of continued United States support.

Many of these same leaders have been, at any given time, critical of the current government: some to the point of imprisonment, or banishment, or self-imposed exile or obscurity. Yet not one figure of public or political prominence has joined the Viet Cong, or its <sup>sham</sup> political voice within South Vietnam, the National Liberation Front. No leader of a major group, no member of any national government, has urged an end to the war on terms that would accept domination by the National Liberation Front or its master, the Communist North Vietnamese regime.

In sum, our forces will be fighting to defend, in South Vietnam, the non-Communist majority of the population who have resisted for many years the terrorism and appeals of an insurgent minority, armed, led and directed from <sup>Communist</sup> North Vietnam, whose success would impose a Communist dictatorship upon the South. Our troops will be fighting alongside the Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam, who have been fighting on for six years despite a casualty rate far higher than we have ever suffered in our history.

Who, then, are the Viet Cong, that our troops will be fighting? They are, to begin with, a minority in South Vietnam. Among the 14 million people of South Vietnam, they are a very tiny minority if we look at the armed guerrilla troops alone, some 160,000 in all. Their strength is probably not much larger when their active political



sympathizers are included. And they remain a small minority -- under a quarter of the population -- even if one counts in all those rural inhabitants who submit -- by virtue of terrorism -- to the presence of Viet Cong units -- or by habit -- to the administrative control of the Viet Cong leaders.

The notion of population "controlled" by the Viet Cong is indeed a useful gauge of their current success; but it is a very inflated measure of their active popular support, or even of passive sympathy. To assume that the success of Communist guerrillas in extending some form of control in rural areas indicates widespread allegiance to their cause is to mistake the very basis of the approach developed by the current rulers in Peking and Hanoi. In particular, it is to miss the function and scale of terrorism in that approach.

In South Vietnam the Viet Cong have never been able to rely upon broad and deep nationalistic or ideological appeal; but the Communist techniques of rural insurgency are designed to operate, where necessary, without such an appeal. Nor is disaffection from the central government essential, though that is no harder to find in rural areas of South Vietnam than in many other agricultural societies.

What is fundamental to the survival and success of a government -- to its ability to collect taxes, to raise military manpower, to further programs of social and economic development, to develop a national spirit of progress and of individual freedom -- is its ability to provide physical security for its officials and its citizens. Since the goal of insurgency is to destroy the authority and control of an existing government so as to substitute control by another, the basic

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step in the Communist technique is to demonstrate the government's inability to provide that physical security.

Beginning in remote, rural areas where the law-enforcement arm of the government is weakest and slowest, there are assassinations and kidnappings. By concentrating on local officials, the terrorists achieve three purposes at once: They dramatize the inability of the central government to protect its own officials, they destroy the government's presence and contact with the rural population in the area, and they demonstrate their own ruthlessness and total commitment -- a lesson that is not lost upon those from whom they demand taxes or labor or information or silence.

As the reputation of their deeds spreads, the guerrillas are able to use local agents ~~relatively~~ openly to collect funds for them, to propagandize, to recruit and to inform on officials, programs, opponents and the movement of government troops. Thus a "shadow" administrative, political arm of the insurgency evolves, protected from betrayal and supported in its demands by the strongarm guerrillas. The analogy to the "protection rackets" run by organized gangsters in big cities in the Twenties is very strong.

This is the process that the Hanoi regime called into play in South Vietnam. It is the process that may be beginning now in Thailand, where we have recently witnessed the assassinations of rural officials, simultaneously with bland statements in Peking that Thailand <sup>too</sup> is ripe for insurgency.



In South Vietnam the assassinations began in earnest in mid-1957, and grew steadily through 1959. In 1960, Communist terrorists assassinated or kidnapped over 2000 local officials, and civilians. In 1964, 436 civic officials were murdered -- an average of 36 a month. In many cases their wives and children were murdered with them. In the same year, 1131 civic officials were kidnapped; and aside from civic officials 1359 South Vietnamese civilians -- government sympathizers, informer, non-cooperators with the VC -- were assassinated and 8423 civilians were kidnapped or captured.

This bleeding and intimidation of the governmental structure in South Vietnam has gone on for eight years; and it goes on today, brutal and selective as ever. In the first six months of this year, the Viet Cong murdered \_\_\_\_\_ civic officials and kidnapped \_\_\_\_\_. What has been added in recent months, as mentioned earlier, is the burning or kidnapping of entire villages, a rampage that has led to the flight of hundreds of thousands of refugees. Statistics like these are hard to comprehend in familiar terms; yet the 11,000 civilians assassinated or kidnapped in 1964 would correspond in terms of United States population to more than 100,000, the 1500 Vietnamese civic officials to more than 15,000 U.S. mayors and councilmen.

Such figures expose starkly the true meaning of "population control" by the Communist guerrillas. To provide information and taxes and sons to the Viet Cong in regions they infest requires no basic sympathy for the guerrillas, no ideological allegiance, no hatred for the central government. It requires <sup>no more</sup> than a decent respect for one's skin.



What of the Viet Cong themselves?

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The rank-and-file soldiers are not, for the most part, Communists: even in the main force units. They are, except for the more recent infiltrators and PAVN units, mostly South Vietnamese in origin. Their military leaders, from high to low, are subject to the discipline of the People's Army of Vietnam; and, to an extent of which the rank and file may be scarcely aware, they are controlled by the High Command of the People's Army in Hanoi. Likewise, the National Liberation Front is dominated by the People's Revolutionary Party, the Communist Party of South Vietnam, which is wholly under the party discipline of the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Communist Party in the North. RAND

Thus, the ~~[well-trained, well-led and hard-fighting]~~ troops of the Viet Cong fall into several categories. They include large numbers who were simply "drafted" or coerced into service, or recruited on various personal grounds; most of these can and must someday be reintegrated into the national life of an independent South Vietnam. They include, among their officers, NCO's and hard-core troops, large numbers of disciplined, experienced guerrilla fighters who fought in the South/with the Viet Minh; who obeyed Hanoi's orders to move North in 1954 and serve in the People's Army or on state farms; and who obeyed orders in 1959 or later to return South in infiltration units via trails in Laos, to fight once more. They include, among the officers and commissars, hardened Communists who could never play any role in an independent, non-Communist South Vietnam but that of dedicated and dangerous conspirators.

Meanwhile, all of these troops -- not only the Northern draftees



or the regular People's Army units -- are serving within the boundaries of South Vietnam as the armed forces of an external power -- the Hanoi regime. It is their purpose, on behalf of that power, to overthrow the government of South Vietnam by armed force, terrorism and subversion. They and the Hanoi regime are engaged in aggression against South Vietnam.

The fact is that Hanoi has long admitted, even boasted, of its support and direction of the insurgency in South Vietnam. As early as 1960, at the Third Congress of the North Vietnamese Communist Party, which completely controls North Vietnam, both Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap, the commander-in-chief of the North Vietnamese armed forces, spoke of the need to "step up" the "revolution in the South." In March 1963 the party organ Hoc Tap stated that the authorities in South Vietnam "are well aware that North Vietnam is the firm base for the southern revolution and the point on which it leans, and that our party is the steady and experienced vanguard unit of the working class and people and is the brain and factor that decides all victories of the revolution."

Yet through most of these years the North Vietnamese government denied and went to great efforts to conceal the scale of its personnel and materiel support, in addition to direction and encouragement, to the Viet Cong. It had strong reasons to do so.

First of all, in 1954 the authorities in Hanoi had pledged to "respect the territory under the military control of the other party" -- South Vietnam -- "and engage in no hostile act against the other party."



In 1962 those same authorities pledged that they would "not use the territory of the kingdom of Laos for interference in the internal affairs of other countries."

X The North Vietnamese regime had no wish to force upon the attention of the world its massive and persistent violations of those pledges. Nor was it anxious for its own citizens to dwell upon the ultimate risks of committing, unequivocally, aggression across international boundaries. Nor could the Viet Cong cause be anything but harmed if it were to be recognized openly in the South as an instrument of the North Vietnamese regime.

However, in building up the Viet Cong forces for a decisive challenge, the authorities in North Vietnam have increasingly dropped the disguises that gave their earlier support a clandestine character.

Through 1963, the bulk of the arms infiltrated from the North were old French and American models acquired prior to 1954 in Indochina and Korea. Now, the weapons flow from North Vietnam consists almost entirely of the latest arms acquired from Communist China; and the flow is large enough to have entirely re-equipped the main force units, despite the capture this year by government forces of thousands of these weapons and millions of rounds of the new ammunition.

Likewise, through 1963, nearly all the personnel infiltrating through Laos, trained and equipped in the North and ordered South, were former Southerners. But in the last eighteen months, the great majority of the infiltrators -- more than 10,000 of them -- have been ethnic



Northerners, mostly draftees ordered into the People's Army of Vietnam for duty in the South. And it is now certain that, starting their journey through Laos last December, from one to three <sup>North Vietnamese</sup> ~~regiments of a~~ North Vietnamese regular division, the 325th Division of the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Army ~~xxxxxxx~~ have deployed into the Central Highlands of South Vietnam for combat alongside the Viet Cong.

Thus despite all its reasons for secrecy, Hanoi's desire for decisive results this summer has led it to measures of intervention that have grown increasingly blatant.

But aggression by North Vietnam did not begin just with the sending of uniformed regular units across international borders. It began much earlier, though it did not take, and still has not fully taken, the classic form of overt invasion. What is new and different in Vietnam is that techniques of rebellion -- including some that the Communist leaders in Peking claim to have invented -- have been harnessed by a neighbor set on conquest. We are witnessing a form of concealed aggression that is applicable, Peking proclaims, to emergent nations throughout the world.

Is it a form of aggression that can be called back? There are those who ask whether Hanoi can, at this late date, reverse the violent process it launched in the South. The fact is that the Hanoi leadership could do a great many things -- things that are unquestionably within their power -- that could make all the difference in South Vietnam. They could do many of them tomorrow.



-- They could order back to their borders the regular units <sup>South</sup> North Vietnamese of the ~~People's Army of Vietnam~~ now deployed in the Central Highlands of Vietnam.

-- They could stop sending Chinese Communist weapons by the thousands and ammunition by the ton into South Vietnam, by porters and junks and ships.

-- They could stop sending, by a variety of means, detailed guidance and commands to the Viet Cong units.

-- They could stop sending tens of thousands of leadership cadre, radiomen, weapons technicians, political specialists and ordinary draftees into the South; and they could call back the ones they have sent.

-- They could disband their dozen or so training camps in North Vietnam where they train infiltrators in guerrilla tactics and techniques of terrorism, assassination and sabotage; and their elaborate infiltration network, with its thousands of guides and transport workers and dozens of way-stations in Laos and South Vietnam.

Without the critical direction, supplies, organization, leadership and manpower that have come from Hanoi in the past, remnants of rebellious insurgency might well remain in South Vietnam; but they could and would be contained without major outside assistance.

Could Hanoi be persuaded to curtail its activities? Not so long, we are sure, as the North Vietnamese leaders continue to believe that achieving United States and they are on the verge of ~~winning~~ a total victory. Even though ~~the~~ South Vietnam air operations in North Vietnam have made those activities more difficult



and costly and have posed larger risks, we do not believe the leadership in Hanoi -- still less, their backers pushing them from Peking -- will give up readily the hopes they have pinned on the Viet Cong build-up and offensive. That is why we must not fail to crush those hopes. Only then, perhaps, will our repeated offers of unconditional discussions of measures to ensure the independence of South Vietnam meet an interested response.

That raises my final question: What are the stakes at issue for the United States -- stakes that justify the sending of American troops in large number -- in this struggle to preserve the independence of South Vietnam?

A simple answer would be incomplete.

A whole range of U.S. national interests involved in maintaining the independence of South Vietnam can be suggested by the various Communist interests in overthrowing it. To begin with, the rulers of the Communist state of North Vietnam wish to extend their Party dictatorship to the 14 million people of South Vietnam; and eventually to the 5 million people of Laos and Cambodia. They and the rulers of Communist China wish to see Thailand outflanked, subjected to the same pressures of subversion, terrorism, infiltration and guerrilla war, and added in turn to the Communist Bloc. They wish the same fate for the neighboring nations of Southeast and South Asia.<sup>7</sup> Going far beyond the interests of Hanoi, the Chinese Communists wish, in the interests of increasing their



prestige, influence and control in the Communist Bloc and throughout the underdeveloped or vulnerable areas of the world, to demonstrate the invincibility of their tactics of subversive war; to undermine faith in the word, the resolution and the power of the United States as a guarantor; to show up the caution of the Soviet Union as unwarranted and discreditable; to demoralize potential victims and to win the active support of the opportunists.

It is strongly in the national interest of the United States to frustrate each one of these objectives, singly and together.

In positive terms, these points come down to two.

JTM { First, we are acting in Vietnam to keep a promise. We are sending troops because they are needed to help preserve South Vietnam's independence, and we have promised to do what was needed. That promise has been made by three successive Presidents, clearly and in constant terms.

Both our behavior and our success are being watched by all those nations in the world who regard their security as dependent upon any form of U.S. assurance. Here is one place where Communist China and the United States Government agree: on the importance of this issue. As we do, Communist China sees the words and actions of the U.S. Government as having forged a clear commitment to the independence of South Vietnam; as we do, she sees the future influence of the United States in the Far East and in many other parts of the world as turning on whether that commitment is proved to be worthless. The value of the national promise of the United States is at stake; and no stake in this contest can be greater in importance to our own national interest.



Second, we are acting in Vietnam to draw a stop-line to ~~xxxx~~  
in Asia, fed and fired by the regime in Hanoi and by Communist China.  
~~xxxxxxxx~~ aggression/ Since the end of the Second World War, the leaders  
of what is now North Vietnam have worked to impose a Communist state  
under their control over all of Vietnam. Their further ambitions extend  
at least to the remaining parts of former French Indochina -- Laos and  
Cambodia. And the appetite and ambition of the regime that has supported  
them and spurs them on -- Communist China -- are far more huge, and not  
limited to the Asian continent. A Free World withdrawal from the present  
challenge in the jungles and mountains of Vietnam would merely transfer  
the battle line to other places.

In the last quarter of a century we have seen aggression in a  
variety of forms; and those kinds we faced up to most resolutely, we have  
not met again. Massive invasion, in World War II; invasion by satellite  
proxy, in Korea; an attempt at "non-nuclear blackmail," in Berlin; an  
attempt at "nuclear blackmail" in Cuba. Where we stood firm, we were spared  
further confrontations.

No less than others, Communist China, for all its bluster, has  
drawn the lessons of those episodes. But just because other forms of  
aggression have been blocked, Peking has not despaired of finding new  
paths to conquest. In Communist China we confront an opponent that views  
international politics as a whole as a vast guerrilla struggle, in which  
a stronger enemy's weak points are to be found and patiently exploited.  
A Communist world dominated by Peking, they know, lies a long way off.  
But the way to it is the guerrilla's way, intimidating, ambushing, demoral-  
izing and weakening those who would uphold an alternative world order.



The Peking leaders believe that a succession of defeats inflicted <sup>an</sup> at points of/enemy's weakness, no matter how great his initial superiority, will gradually erode his strength, his support and his morale and eventually reduce him to absolute inferiority. It is a strategy that worked for them in their own revolution, and has succeeded in other contests. It demands, above all, patience; and a long-term confidence based on contempt for the patience, the will and resolution of the opponent. The Peking leadership has both.

X We are being tested. In blunt terms: have we the guts, the grit, the determination to stick with a frustrating, bloody, difficult course as long as it takes to see it through without getting bored or despairing, without losing sight of all our objectives, without being lured by false promises of short-cuts? The Asian Communists are sure that we have not.

That is why they are not interested in discussions of a settlement; to achieve total victory, they believe, they need only wait for us to quit. And the Chinese Communists, far more, even, than Hanoi, want a total victory in this confrontation. They are concerned with bigger stakes than the control of South Vietnam; in the worldwide guerrilla struggle they see themselves conducting against the United States, South Vietnam itself is to be our Dienbienphu.

The only question is how long it will take. Two years? Three years? How long will it be, they ask their listeners sardonically, before the U.S. tires of its wearisome task, how long will it maintain the efforts it has pledged?

X There is only one answer for us to give. It was made for us three years ago, by an American statesman whose death the world mourns this month, in the midst of another crisis that tested our resolution.

Till hell freezes over.